

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 1/19/16**Aii Releases New Report Highlighting Jones Act as Outdated Trade Policy**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Alliance for Innovation and Infrastructure (Aii) released a new report today, “The Jones Act: Protectionism v Global Trade,” calling the Jones Act outdated, especially as the United States is entering new global markets and removing longstanding barriers to trade.

The Jones Act, also known as the Merchant Marine Act of 1920, was implemented nearly a century ago to protect the U.S. shipping industry from foreign competition and boost national security during wartime. To this day, the Act requires vessels traveling between two U.S. ports be U.S. built, owned, flagged, and operated by a crew of 75 percent American citizens.

Roughly six dozen Jones Act-required vessels are in operation today, and for almost 100 years, these ships have not been subject to competition. Additionally, the Jones Act drastically increases transportation costs to island territories, which leads to a higher cost of living and higher energy prices in islands such as Hawaii and Puerto Rico.

In regards to the report, Aii’s Executive Director, Shane Skelton says, “In an increasingly competitive global economy, the rationale for protectionist policies like the Jones Act becomes weaker each day. Any policy that increases the price of moving goods, and at times favors exports at the expense of intra-state trade, should be carefully scrutinized.”

According to the World Economic Forum and the World Bank, the Jones Act represents the most restrictive cabotage law, not just among industrialized nations, but in the world. In its latest report, the Alliance suggests amending this legislation in order for the U.S. to strengthen its place on the international stage through competition and global trade.

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The Alliance for Innovation and Infrastructure (Aii) consists of two non-profit organizations, The National Infrastructure Safety Foundation (NISF) a 501(c)(4), and the Public Institute for Facility Safety (PIFS) a 501(c)(3). The Foundation and the Institute focus on non-partisan policy issues and are governed by separate volunteer boards working in conjunction with the Alliance’s own volunteer Advisory Council.